



News Release

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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**EMERGENCY STREAM CHANNEL PERMITS AVAILABLE
FOR RESIDENTS FACED WITH RISING STREAM LEVELS**

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Idaho's on-going heavy snowfalls coupled with forecasted higher temperatures and rain mean some Idahoans may soon be faced with possible flooding which has prompted state stream channel managers and Federal officials to offer emergency stream channel alteration permitting information to help them take proper and quick action should flood fighting efforts become necessary, the Idaho Department of Water Resources said today.

Should rapid snow melt runoff cause river levels to rise towards flood stage, residents may need to do emergency stream channel flood control work as a way to protect their property. However, state law requires people to first get a permit from IDWR before the work can be done. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may also require permits before flood control work can be done.

The IDWR emergency permit system is designed to avoid burdens of time delays for residents and local governments who need to do emergency stream channel work as a precaution against flooding or to preserve and protect their property. Emergency permits are limited to only that work which is necessary to safeguard life or property, including growing crops, during the period of emergency. Despite staffing shortages, IDWR stream channel specialists may also be able to offer limited technical assistance.

Emergency stream channel alteration permit applications are available at any IDWR Office. The permit application, plus information about U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit requirements, is also available on-line at the "News & Events" element of the IDWR Internet web site. The address is **www.idwr.state.id.us**

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The completed application can be faxed or mailed to IDWR for approval. Telephoning any IDWR office can also start the approval process. Stream channel work requested in the emergency permit application will be closely scrutinized before approval to prevent any unnecessary damage to the stream or river.

"The emergency permit system tries to balance the immediate need to do flood control work against the injury to the stream that will remain after the high water has subsided," said Erv Ballou, IDWR's state stream channel protection program manager.

The Walla Walla District administers the Corps of Engineers Regulatory Program in Idaho under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899. Under these laws, permits are generally required from the Corps for most construction activities in waterways and wetlands. This includes lakes and ponds, and intermittent and perennial rivers, streams and creeks, according to Corps officials.

"The last thing we want is for people to be delayed while trying to find out what they can do to protect their homes and other property, repair flood damage, or have to worry about what permits are required. We've got some information to provide Idahoans some basic, general guidance regarding permit requirements for flood protection and repair work," said A. Bradley Daly, who heads the agency's Regulatory Division.

"We have eight people permanently located in field offices in Boise, Idaho Falls and Coeur d'Alene, as well as the staff in our District office in Walla Walla. We are all available to answer questions for specific situations. In some cases, we are available to meet with folks on-site to inspect the problem, offer recommendations and discuss permit requirements," Daly added.

More Corps of Engineer permitting information is also available on the regulator area of their web site at: **www.nwww.usace.army.mil/html/offices/op/rf/rfhome.htm**

For more Idaho permitting information, contact any IDWR Office, which are located in:

- Coeur d'Alene - 1910 Northwest Blvd., Suite 210, (208) 769-1450, Fax: (208) 769-1454
- Lewiston – 1118 F. Street, (208) 743-0301, Fax: (208) 743-0415
- Boise - 2735 Airport Way, (208) 334-2190, Fax: (208) 334-2348
- Twin Falls - 1341 Fillmore, Suite 200, (208) 736-3033, Fax: (208) 736-3037
- Idaho Falls - 900 Skyline Drive, (208) 525-7161, Fax: (208) 525-7177
- Salmon - 206 Van Dreff, Suite B, (208) 756-6644, Fax: (Call First)
- IDWR State Office, 1301 North Orchard Street, Boise, ID (208) 327-7900, Fax: (208) 327-7866